



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 29, 2010

CONTACT:  
Sue Walitsky 202-224-4524 or  
202-320-0819

## **CARDIN CALLS GAO'S LATEST REJECTION OF DC STORMWATER FEES UNACCEPTABLE**

***"At stake is a fundamental issue of equity"***

*Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), Chairman of the Environment and Public Works Water and Wildlife Subcommittee, released the following statement in response to the September 29 letter from the General Accountability Office (GAO) that it will not pay the portion of the DC Government's stormwater fee used to reduce the pollutants covered by the city's EPA issued stormwater permit.*

"Today's letter from GAO is confusing both legally and logically. It makes one thing clear to me, however: government agencies need to stop avoiding their responsibilities and start paying their fair share to clean up the Anacostia and Potomac rivers and Rock Creek.

"Thousands of pounds of pollutants pour off the streets of our nation's Capital annually, polluting local rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. The Federal Government owns 30% of the land in the District and you can be certain that much of that pollution is coming from these government properties.

"At stake is a fundamental issue of equity: polluters should be financially responsible for the pollution that they cause. That includes the federal government.

"The problem is not confined to Washington, D.C.

- Charles Bannister, President of the Gwinnett County, Georgia, Commissioners wrote to me last month saying that his County is owed more than \$304,000 by the federal government for unpaid stormwater fees.
- On the opposite side of the country, Timothy Leavitt, Mayor of Vancouver, Washington, has a similar story. He writes that the Bonneville Power Administration stopped paying its stormwater utility bill earlier this year. As the mayor writes, "\$68,000 in unpaid utility bills has accrued in an economic environment in which every dollar matters to the City."

"I introduced S. 3481 in early June and it passed out of the Environment and Public Works Committee three weeks later. It will put an end to the excuses. The bill says simply and unequivocally that the federal government has to pay stormwater fees just like everyone else.

"The time for tortured logic is over. We need to pass my bill to require the federal government to pay its stormwater pollution fees just like everybody else."

###